What the Sculptors Saw

T. M. Davidson

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Ulrich Middeldorf

A

I. The Sheikh-el-Beled

What the Sculptors Saw

TRAVEL STUDIES

BY THE LATE

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TO

THE MEMORY OF

MARGARET DAVIDSON

MY COMPANION

IN TRAVEL AND STUDY

PREFACE.

THIS volume is the amplification of papers read to the Dundee Symposium:—

(i.) February, 1903: "The Art of Ancient Greece."
(ii.) December, 1908: "The Evolution of Christian Art."
(iii.) March, 1911: "Idealism in Greek Art."
(iv.) November, 1924: "Studies in Sculpture."

The keynote of the volume is *contrast*. By selecting and contrasting characteristic features of some of the great sculptures of the world the author tries to emphasise the particular quality of each. The impulses of the artist and the qualities in which they find expression may be grouped under the four subjoined headings:—

(i.) *Realism*.—This seeks to represent what is actually seen by the artist. It is found in the portrait sculptures of various nations and, notably, in early Egyptian art (4000 B.C.).

(ii.) *Symbolism*.—This tries to suggest what cannot be actually seen, and is resorted to by nations "groping after God" and seeking to express their conceptions of divine qualities by appropriate symbols. This is strikingly manifested in the Assyrian sculpture of the eighth century B.C.

(iii.) *Physical Idealism*.—This tries to represent the perfection of form which is complete in what is seen. No other people has given such complete expression to conceptions of majesty, self-control, beauty and symmetry as the Greeks of the fifth and fourth centuries B.C.

(iv.) *Religious Idealism.*—This tries to represent the expression of the moral and religious emotions. "To bring the *invisible* full into play"—to express the soul, however incompletely, is the motif of Christian art; we find this "Soul-expression"—the struggle with evil, the pathos of life, and the soul's yearning for the highest ideals—embodied in Gothic sculpture and in many sculptures of the Italian Renaissance.

The author believes that the study and contrast of these qualities affords an excellent basis for the study of history in its widest sense as the study of civilisation.

The writer's indebtedness to various authors is more than he can express; he is particularly indebted, however, to Professor Percy Gardner, Professor of Classical Archæology in the University of Oxford, for reading the MS. of this volume, and for valuable suggestions; the main source of his knowledge has been the study of sculptures in museums at home and abroad, and particularly the British Museum, London.

His most abiding inspiration has been the haunting memory of the ruins of the Parthenon on the Acropolis of Athens, where the soul of beauty had once her habitation.

T. M. Davidson.

NOTE.

After the death of Margaret Yule, his first wife, this volume was prepared by T. M. Davidson as a memorial of their long intellectual and spiritual companionship. The MS. was left in my hands during his visit to Australia, and returned to me again, after the accident of his death. I take this opportunity of expressing my indebtedness to his widow for her pious co-operation in the final preparation for the issue of the volume.

R. C. Buist.

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CHAPTER I.

Portraiture in Wood and Stone.

"The Egyptian sculptor was a photographer in stone."
J. E. Harrison: "Studies in Greek Art."

IF, in the study of sculpture, our quest were beauty, rhythm, symmetry, and dignity, then should we hasten to the innermost shrine of the Palace of Art and pay homage to the genius of the Greek—so great is the charm of Idealism!

But Realism, too, has its charm—bringing before us the personalities and customs of bygone civilisations. Realism in sculpture might be illustrated from almost any period of Art, but we naturally turn our attention to the portrait sculptures of ancient Egypt, the oldest in the world. From the large collection now available we select the following for consideration:—

(i.) The Sheikh-el-Beled.
(ii.) The Seated Scribe.
(iii.) The Crouching Scribe of the Louvre.
(iv.) The Portrait Statue of Tutankhamen.

(i.) There is a valuable collection of Egyptian sculptures in the British Museum, but it is in the Museum at Cairo that we find the best examples of the realistic art of early Egyptian times. There we may see the actual portraits of individuals who lived in Egypt many thousand years ago.

The first acquaintance with these statues takes us by surprise, they are so life-like. We feel in the presence of "the stone that breathes," so remarkable are they in their reproduction of personal traits.

One of the oldest of these realistic statues is known by the name of the Sheikh-el-Beled, or "Chief of the Village" (Plate I.), the name given to it by the workmen who unearthed it, because it was so like their own Sheikh. It is nearly four feet high, is made of wood, and was originally covered with stucco. One method of reckoning dates it somewhere about 4000 B.C.

Standing a little distance off, and looking straight at the face of the Sheikh, we are impressed with the individual character of the man here portrayed: we are struck with his frankness, and with the intellectual power stamped on his face; we note also a suggestion of pleasantry about the mouth, as if the lips were about to break into a smile of greeting to which we feel inclined to respond. It is difficult for us to imagine that we are separated from this man by so great an interval of time.

To show the careful nature of this work we would direct attention to the eyes: the cornea is made of white quartz, and in the centre of the eyeball there is a piece of sparkling crystal; the eyelids are represented by small pieces of bronze, and the result is a wonderful imitation of the human eye.

So strongly does the individuality of the Sheikh impress us that we can recall his face at will—the face of one we seem to have known in the flesh.

"The Sheikh-el-Beled marks the apogee of Memphite art, and if some exhibition of the world's masterpieces were to be inaugurated, I should choose this work to uphold the honour of Egyptian art." [1]

(ii.) Another work which arrests our attention in the

[1] Maspero: "Art in Egypt," p. 84.

II. THE CROUCHING SCRIBE

Cairo Museum is the limestone statue of the Seated Scribe. We are unable to pass this statue with a merely casual glance—it is too attractive; we recognise it at once as a faithful portrait.

In these statues the face is the most attractive part. We are arrested by the fixed look of the Scribe, just as if some living person were steadily gazing at us; the look is an invitation to spend some time in his company; we respond to the invitation, as we feel he has much to tell us. Can it really be six thousand years since the Scribe, so faithfully represented here, followed his vocation? Even now, in his upward glance, and in the readiness of his posture, he seems to await our pleasure—"A scribe at your service!"

(iii.) Another well-known example of the portrait sculpture of this period (4000 B.C.) is the Crouching Scribe of the Louvre (Plate II.). Here, too, we have the look of eager anticipation in a very intelligent face. The Scribe seems to read our thoughts before we utter them; he is ready to inscribe our message of love, goodwill, or sadness. We recognise in the portrait a particular individual whose character and vocation are clearly revealed in face and posture.

(iv.) One of the most important archæological discoveries ever made in Egypt is the finding of the tomb of the ancient king Tutankhamen, in 1922. This young Pharaoh ruled for a short period over Egypt some three thousand years ago. The treasures of the tomb have stirred the imagination of the civilised world, and the two figures that stood outside the sealed-up entrance to the sepulchral chamber are the finest contributions to the portrait statues of ancient Egypt the world now possesses. They are seven feet high, blackened with bitumen, and decorated with beaten gold; they are considered to be speaking likenesses—"photographs in wood"—of the Pharaoh Tutankhamen.

Regarding these portrait sculptures of ancient Egypt certain questions arise: Why were such works of art buried out of sight? The modern world would certainly have known nothing of them but for archæological research. And why was there no endeavour, on the part of the sculptor, to avoid an exact imitation of accidental features—even bodily defects? Why no endeavour to portray some of the *essential* and *permanent qualities* of the race? This we see in the so-called portrait statues of the Greek statesman Pericles, the Greek tragedian Sophocles, or the statues of Greek athletes; but in Egypt we find instead, in each case, an exact imitation, in physiognomy and feature, of some particular individual, as if the liberty of the sculptor were severely restrained by conventional bonds.

Definite answers can be given to these questions. One of the beliefs of the ancient Egyptians was that every living person had a double, or *Ka;* after death the *Ka* lived on and could only attach itself to the mummy. But what if the mummy should be destroyed? In the event of such a calamity happening, these statues, so realistic in every detail, were thought capable of deceiving the *Ka*, and for this reason were buried in the tombs with the mummies. This belief affords a reasonable explanation of the wonderful fidelity to nature found in early Egyptian art; and the Egyptian sculptor, in endeavouring to produce "a speaking likeness," without any *ideal* qualities, was "a photographer in *stone*."

Realistic sculpture enriches our thoughts of the past. In the portrait sculptures of ancient Egypt, Pharaohs, Scribes, Sheikhs, and Priests live again in our presence; we gaze upon them in wonder, and think of all they saw and accomplished in far-off times when civilisation was in its cradle.

CHAPTER II.

A Protective Deity.

> "The Assyrians thought in symbols, and expressed by symbols; they could not express their god Ashur in some fitting outward form, they could only indicate his qualities by symbols."
>
> *J. E. Harrison:* "Studies in Greek Art."

THE Greeks thought of their gods and goddesses as idealised men and women; other nations, unable to think of their gods in human form, resorted to Symbolism as the best means for the expression of godlike qualities. Thus we find strange fantastic creatures, the Egyptian god Thoth, with the body of a man and the head of an ibis; or the winged man-headed lion of Assyria.

Visitors to the British Museum find the art of Assyria peculiarly rich in Symbolism. As we pass into the Assyrian transept we are confronted with two imposing statues of a strange composite creature, which possesses a human face, the body of a lion, and the wings of an eagle; this is Symbolism in a marked degree—a Symbolism which departs from the concrete reality of nature, but which, when analysed, is rich in meaning. We look at these statues in wonder, and the questions arise: Where did they stand, and what did they signify to their worshippers in Assyria three thousand years ago?

Our guidebook to the Assyrian antiquities informs us that the doorways of Assyrian palaces were adorned with

colossal figures of winged man-headed lions or bulls, and that the two in the British Museum (Plate III.) stood at the doorway, one on either side, of the palace of Ashur-nasir-pal, King of Assyria (B.C. 885-860).

They were excavated by Sir Henry Layard at Nimrud, the ancient Calah mentioned in Scripture (Genesis x. 11), and they add greatly to the value of the treasures in the British Museum.

When we have satisfied our curiosity as to the original site of these statues, and interested ourselves in some details —such as the conventional and decorative treatment of the limbs and hair, and also the curious device of the sculptor in introducing an extra fore-limb, so that two are visible whether viewed from the front or the side—the most important question remains: What do the symbols signify? Surely, and judging particularly from the face, they were an endeavour to express the qualities of some benign deity. We find this idea confirmed in the belief held by the Assyrians that invisible spirits were the cause of every form of evil. How, then, could evil be kept from the palace of the King, unless it were guarded by some deity stronger, swifter, and more intelligent than the evil spirits themselves? To such a deity the Assyrian King would pray for protection and deliverance. The following is an interesting extract from an invocation by Sargon, King of Assyria (B.C. 722-705), at whose palace the guardian deity had the body of a bull:—"May Ashur bless this city and this palace! May the sculptured bull, the guardian spirit, stand for ever before his face! May he keep watch here night and day, and may his feet never move from the threshold!"

In the light of this invocation the great symbolic figure becomes intelligible to us. The human face is the symbol of watchful intelligence, the body of a lion or a bull the symbol of strength, and the wings of an eagle the symbol of speed and endurance. In these three symbols we see

III. WINGED MAN-HEADED LION
(W. F. Mansell, Photo)

an endeavour to express the divine qualities of omniscience, omnipotence, and omnipresence.

As the Assyrian King passed through the portals of his palace and went forth to accept the fate of battle, or take the fortune of the chase, we can imagine him entreating the guardian deity of his palace to protect in his absence those who were near and dear to him.

Assyria's greatest god was Ashur. From a study of Assyrian seals and sculptures in the British Museum, we find this god represented in symbolic form. The simplest form is a winged disc—probably of Egyptian origin. The meaning of this composite symbol is evident. The strength and endurance of the great Assyrian god, his power to bless and to smite, is as the sun itself, hence the sun's disc. Ashur, too, is swift, so swift that time and space have no meaning for this chief of Assyrian gods; and how could such a quality be better expressed than by the wings of a bird? In some representations of the god a cord descends from the disc, and an Assyrian King holds the cord in his hand. This visible bond between the god and his worshipper is doubtless the symbol of the invisible bond of prayer—a symbol of the means whereby human needs are expressed and fulfilled.[1]

We shall find, when we come to the study of Greek art, that Greek sculptors had no need to resort to symbolism for the expression of divine qualities; for them the human form was adequate to express the majesty, wisdom, grace, and beauty of their respective deities.

[1] *Cf.* J. E. Harrison: "Studies in Greek Art," p. 51.

CHAPTER III.

"Men and Women Divinely Fair."

"Permit me still to praise
The higher genius of departed days.

. . . . .

Greece with calm eyes I see,
Her pure white marbles have not blinded me,
But breathe on me the love
Of earthly things as bright as things above."
Walter Savage Landor: "The Genius of Greece."

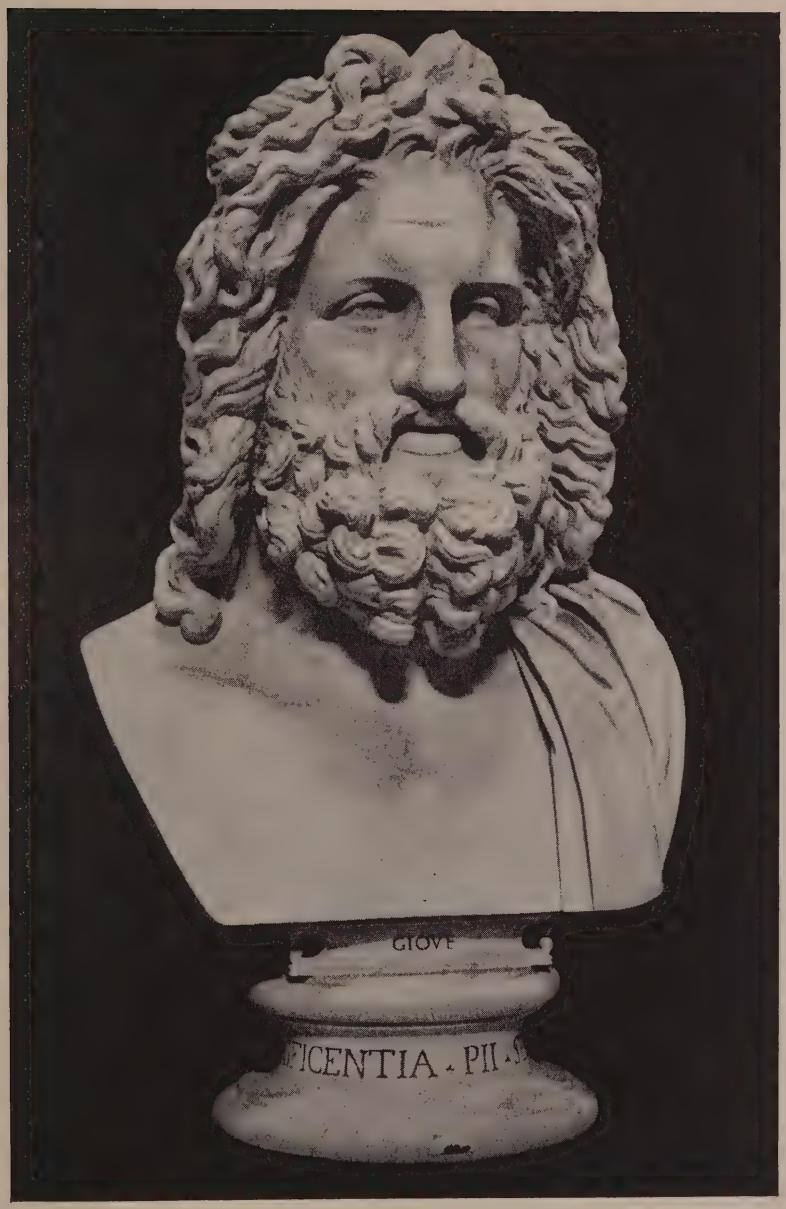
WHEN we leave the consideration of Realism and Symbolism, as we find these qualities expressed in the art of Egypt and Assyria respectively, and approach that of Idealism, we leave, as it were, the outer courts and enter the very sanctuary of art. That sanctuary, in time and place, is the Golden Age of Greece. Here we find ourselves in a region of unparalleled genius. Hints we have of Idealism, it is true, in the art of Egypt, but not until we come to the Golden Age of Greece do we meet with it as the essential mode of a nation's art.

In the realm of art, Greek sculpture marks the highest point attained by the genius of man: from that altitude he may look downward upon the efforts of other peoples and of other times, and learn the significance of their art as the expression of religious feelings and aspirations, or as historical records; but of the genius of no other people may it be said, as of the Art and Literature of the Greeks:—

"Every thought of all their thinking
Swayed the world for good or ill;
Every pulse of all their life-blood
Beats across the ages still." [1]

To all who love the beauty and grace of life, the art of Greece is a never-failing source of delight; indeed, there are many to whom the marvellous beauty of the human form does not appeal as a thought of the Creator until they see it embodied

[1] F. W. H. Myers: "The Greeks."



IV. ZEUS OF OTRICOLI

in Greek art. The Greek sculptor thought of his gods as majestic human beings; he had the vision also of mankind made in the image of his gods; hence the dignity of his art. We feel the pre-eminence of Greek art when we visit the great sculpture galleries of the world. For example, in that great treasure-house of antiquity, the British Museum, where the arts of Egypt, Assyria, and Greece may be compared and contrasted, the room containing the "Elgin Marbles" has attractions beyond all others; its spell is irresistible; and to that shrine of Greek art we make repeated pilgrimages to pay homage to the genius of the Greek. There we find in marble the most wonderful embodiment of youthful vigour, matronly reserve, and manly dignity which the world has ever seen—faces and forms of a Dreamland, where grace and beauty characterise its youth, and self-control its manhood.

Did such a race ever exist as is portrayed in Greek art? Greek men may have been handsome and Greek women beautiful, but with the vision in our minds of the Theseus and the Fates of the Parthenon we realise that Greek art introduces us into a world not of portraiture but of idealistic conceptions. The Greek sculptor was a clever craftsman, but he was more; he was an artist and a creator; to the most beautiful model which nature could present to the eye, he added the beauty of his own inward vision.

For centuries critics have praised and poets have sung the ideal qualities of Greek art; and Byron's lines on the Venus of Melos may well be applied to every work which reflects the charm of the Golden Age:—

> . . . "the veil
> Of heaven is half withdrawn, within the pale
> We stand and in that form and face behold
> What Mind can make, when Nature's self would fail." [2]

An important question meets us on the threshold of the

[2] "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage," Canto IV., Stanza xlix.

Golden Age, namely: What went before that illustrious period? That question involves reference to the art of Mycenæ, which "blossomed richly as early as the twentieth century B.C.,"[3] and is well represented by golden ornaments, bronze weapons, and gems in the National Museum at Athens, the British Museum, and elsewhere; reference also to the influence of the art of other nations, and particularly that of Egypt, on the art of Greece; and, lastly, reference to the Archaic period of Greek sculpture itself—a period in which the sculptor gained mastery over bronze and marble until they became the means of expressing a nation's highest ideals. But, interesting as these studies are, and necessary to the full grasp of the history of Greek art, we do not purpose dealing with them in detail; we are to concern ourselves with the sculpture of the Golden Age.

When we have felt the charm of Ideality as expressed in Greek art, the question arises: What led the Greek sculptors of the fifth century B.C. to idealise the human form?

A twofold answer is usually given to this question:—

(1) Anthropomorphism—the Greek conception of their gods and goddesses as majestic men and women.

(2) The influence exerted by the Olympic games upon the artistic temperament of the Greeks.

The anthropomorphic conception of Greek deities was inherent in the race, and is embodied in the writings of Greek poets from Homer down to the age of Phidias. It might therefore be said that the Idealism of Greek art had a literary inspiration—modified and refined by the poetic and philosophic thought of the time of Pericles.

A visit to the sculpture galleries of the British Museum enables us to realise the broad contrast which exists between the mythology of Greece and that of other nations. In the Egyptian galleries, for example, we find gods in the form of the baboon, the bull, the hawk, and the crocodile; also

[3] Furtwängler and Urlichs: "Greek and Roman Sculpture," p. 1.

v. Head of the Lemnian Athena

creatures with a human body and the head of an animal such as the lioness, cat, jackal, crocodile, and the hawk. In the Assyrian galleries, also, as already mentioned, composite creatures worshipped as gods are to be found. When we pass into the Greek galleries the difference is very striking; for here we find the deities of ancient Greece represented as men and women of majestic mould; we are so impressed with their dignity that we may well exclaim:—

> "O wonder!
> How many goodly creatures are there here!
> How beauteous mankind is! O brave new world
> That has such people in't."[4]

In the presence of these "goodly creatures" we are made to realise two things:—first, that the art of the Golden Age was anthropomorphic; and, secondly, that it was idealistic. It was anthropomorphic in so far as it represented the gods of Greece in the form of men and women; in endowing them with a majesty far transcending that of the men and women of this earth, it was idealistic.

With the Idealism of Greek art there will ever be associated the name of Phidias, the greatest sculptor of antiquity. Phidias towers above his fellows as Michelangelo towers above the other great sculptors of the Italian Renaissance. In the realm of art, Phidias was the greatest exponent of Greek mythology, as Michelangelo was of Hebraic and Christian thought.

Unfortunately, the greatest works of the greatest Greek sculptor have perished. These were his colossal statues of Athena and Zeus. The only knowledge we now possess of these statues is gained from literary sources, some representations on coins, and, in the case of Athena Parthenos, a small and unattractive replica. While we cannot study these works directly, we shall endeavour to gather some information regarding their ideal qualities.

[4] Shakespeare: "The Tempest," Act V., Scene i., lines 182-5.

The colossal statue of Athena in bronze stood in the open air on the Acropolis; the goddess was armed with helmet, shield, and spear, and looked down upon the city which bore her name; while in the Parthenon, the most beautiful of all Greek temples, stood the famous statue of the goddess made of gold and ivory.

To her worshippers Athena was the embodiment of wisdom and self-control. She was inventress of the arts of war and peace, and inspirer of all elevated thoughts in literature and art. In the statues of Phidias, we are led to believe that all the virtues ascribed by the Athenians to their guardian deity were adequately represented.

The greatest achievement of Phidias, however, was his Zeus, made for the temple of that god at Olympia. The literary references to this statue are numerous; we are informed by Pausanias, who travelled in the reign of the Emperor Hadrian, that it was seated on a throne of gold and ivory, and, including the base, was nearly forty feet high. The drapery and the ornaments were made of thin plates of gold beaten over a wooden core, while small plates of ivory were shaped and moulded on the wood to represent the flesh.

We can well imagine a Greek sculptor hesitating to execute a statue of Zeus; for who could hope to embody in a material form the majesty of the supreme god!

Phidias was offered the commission, and undertook the task. The demands upon the genius of the sculptor were twofold: he had to satisfy the traditional idea of Zeus as conveyed in Homer's lines:—"Kronion spake, and bowed his dark brow, and the ambrosial locks waved from the King's immortal head, and he made great Olympus quake"; [5] and he had also to satisfy that finer and higher conception of the godhead contained in the writings of contemporary poets and philosophers. Phidias lived in an age of great

[5] "Iliad," Leaf's translation, lines 528-30.

VI. APHRODITE OF MELOS
(Alanari Photo)

thinkers; and, happily for us, the ideals of his contemporaries have been preserved.

The Golden Age of Greece has been termed the "Milky Way" of great men. When we reflect on the illustrious names which adorn this age, it seems a marvellous coincidence that the greatest sculptor the world has ever known should have been given to Greece at this time to embody its ideals in marble.

Let us recall some of these ideals:—Pericles, the great Athenian statesman, had his vision—that of an ideal city, so richly adorned by the genius of his countrymen, that it would be the pride of Greece; Anaxagoras, philosopher, and teacher of Pericles, held that the Universe was governed by a power other than chance or necessity; Sophocles, the great tragedian, believed in "the goodness of the Divine agency that governs the world, . . . and in the unwritten but eternal law of purity which is always identical with the true will of the gods";[6] Herodotus, the father of History, "justified the ways of Heaven to men by showing how sin is punished with ruin";[6] Socrates, too, had his vision—he believed in the immortality of the soul, and in the existence of a beneficent Supreme Being.

It may seem irrelevant to introduce here the Ideal Theory of Plato (that the soul of man brings with it, from a pre-natal existence, the memory of ideas or forms of which everything here is but an imperfect copy). Plato belongs to a later generation: still, it is interesting to find that some writers co-relate the Ideal Theory of Plato with the art of Phidias. "In the year 429 B.C.," writes one authority, "a boy was born whose mission it was to tell the world in words that will never die just this thought, just this doctrine—for art, for philosophy, for religion—which Phidias embodied in his statues of Zeus and Athena, and which lives on still for us in the marbles of the Parthenon." Only by the help

[6] R. C. Jebb: "Greek Literature," pp. 88, 105.

of Plato's theory of Ideality in art can we understand the special distinctive character and quality of the work of Phidias.[7]

Such being the nature of contemporary, or almost contemporary, thought, do we wonder that Phidias was inspired to model a Zeus which not only satisfied the traditions and intensified the devotions of the common people, but which, at the same time, proved acceptable to the poets and the philosophers of his day as being "the form in which Zeus would appear if he should choose to reveal himself to mortal eyes"?[8]

From literary sources we gather that the Zeus of Phidias was the most wonderful anthropomorphic conception of the godhead ever embodied in visible form, and contained the finest representation of that Idealism which is the charm of Greek art. A striking passage from a writer of the first century (Dion Chrysostom) tells of the wonderful effect the figure of Zeus had upon its worshippers: "Standing face to face with this statue, the toil-worn found rest; the sorrow-laden forgot his grief; the sleepless one found balm to his soul; pain, passion, and hate were lulled to rest; and every calamity of life was forgotten."

As to our illustration (Plate IV.):—This head of Zeus was found at Otricoli, near Rome, and is now in the Vatican Museum. It was thought at one time to be a copy of the head of the Olympian Zeus; but it is no longer regarded in that light. It lacks the complacency of the sculptures of the Golden Age, and is now placed in a later period. It is supposed to be the copy of the head of a marble statue by an unknown sculptor.

Nevertheless, to look upon this head is to feel in the presence of a great conception: it is Zeus, the Zeus of Homer! Here are "the ambrosial locks," and "the King's

[7] J. E. Harrison: "Studies in Greek Art," p. 221.

[8] E. A. Gardner: "Handbook of Greek Sculpture," p. 263.

immortal head"; here is the supreme god from whom all kings were descended; and here, too, we gaze upon the benevolent friend of strangers.

We shall now consider, briefly, some other representations of the Homeric deities.

Athena Lemnia.—This bronze statue of Phidias stood in the open on the summit of the Acropolis. It was a votive offering by the Athenians on the island of Lemnos, and was known as the Lemnian Athena. Of this bronze original no trace remains; but in the municipal Museum at Bologna there is a head (Plate V.) said to be a copy of the head of the famous statue by Phidias, and which has been identified with a headless statue of Athena at Dresden. At first sight the Lemnian Athena does not seem attractive: she exercises no spell, as does the Goddess of Love; no promise of ease or pleasure falls from her lips; her appeal is to the mind. But the attraction grows until we pay a willing homage to the goddess, for we realise that we are in the presence of one who is strong and wise: to her worshippers she offers wisdom and strength—the wisdom that is "more precious than rubies, and the gain thereof than fine gold"; she, too, like Aphrodite, has joys to give; not fleeting, but lasting and spiritual—the joy of labour, of service to the state, of preparation to defend one's home and city in time of war, and the joy of dedicating labour, genius, and health to the service of the gods.

While all admit the excellence of the Bologna head, authorities differ as to its exact authorship and period.[9] If, as is assumed by Furtwängler,[10] this marble head is really a copy of the bronze original by Phidias, then do we realise, in some measure, the pride of the Athenians in Lemnos who dedicated the statue; likewise the joy of the Athenian citizens in beholding, daily, the embodiment of that wisdom which

[9] E. A. Gardner: "Handbook of Greek Sculpture," p. 265.
[10] *Cf.* "Greek and Roman Sculpture," p. 21.

had made their city famous in peace and war, and in gleaning from her lips her message to mankind:—

> "Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control,
> These three alone lead life to sovereign power." [11]

Aphrodite of Melos.—Of the representations of the Goddess of Love we possess but one original—the Aphrodite of Melos (Plate VI.). This famous statue, though belonging to the later Hellenistic period, possesses all the excellence of the sculpture of the Golden Age. Its charm is too well known for description here: and, indeed, is beyond the power of words to express. To the appreciative beholder the room in the Louvre becomes a shrine; and, for him, "the veil of Heaven is half-withdrawn." Here, surely, is the perfect ideal of womanhood as it existed in the mind of the Creator—as near the Platonic ideal as any earthly copy could possibly be. We envy the sculptor his vision, for he has embodied in stone all that has ever been said or sung in praise of God's most beautiful creation.

Other representations of Greek deities are to be found on the Metopes and Friezes of Greek temples, notably on the Frieze of the Parthenon—to which we shall refer later.

We conclude our thoughts on Anthropomorphism by the following quotations:—

"We see this Anthropomorphic conception of the gods in literature long before it appears in art. Homer's gods are men and women divinely fair." [12]

God in the form of man—the embodiment of ideal wisdom, grace, and power within the limitations of the human form is thus expressed by a modern poet:—

> "A double essence, Human and Divine,
> So that the God is hidden in the man,
> And something Human bounds and forms the God." [13]

[11] Tennyson: "Œnone," lines 144-5.
[12] J. E. Harrison: "Studies in Greek Art," p. 177.
[13] Lewis Morris: "Epic of Hades—Artemis."

VII. THE PARTHENON—ATHENS

CHAPTER IV.

"Earth's Proudest Gem"—The Parthenon.

> "Earth proudly wears the Parthenon
> As the best gem upon her zone."
> *Emerson*: "The Problem."

WHILE the Zeus and the Athena of Phidias are only known to us through literary sources, the sculptures of the Parthenon, mutilated as many of them are by "time, war, flood, and fire," remain to testify to the vision and the power of the great Greek sculptor.

We shall refer briefly to the Parthenon and its story (Plates VII. and VIII.). The temple was of the Doric order, and built of Pentelic marble. Ictinus and Callicrates were the architects of the temple; the sculptures were designed and executed under the superintendence of Phidias; and the inspiring influence was the genius and character of Pericles. The temple was erected on the summit of the Acropolis as a shrine for the great gold and ivory statue of Athena by Phidias. "It stood intact when St. Paul gazed upon it; it was girt about and shining with the same splendour as in the days of Pericles—the purest thing ever conceived by the religious genius of Greece, and the most perfect work of art ever embodied upon our earth." [1]

In its subsequent history the Parthenon passed through many vicissitudes. As a pagan temple it stood intact for

[1] Abbé Fouard: "St. Paul and His Missions."

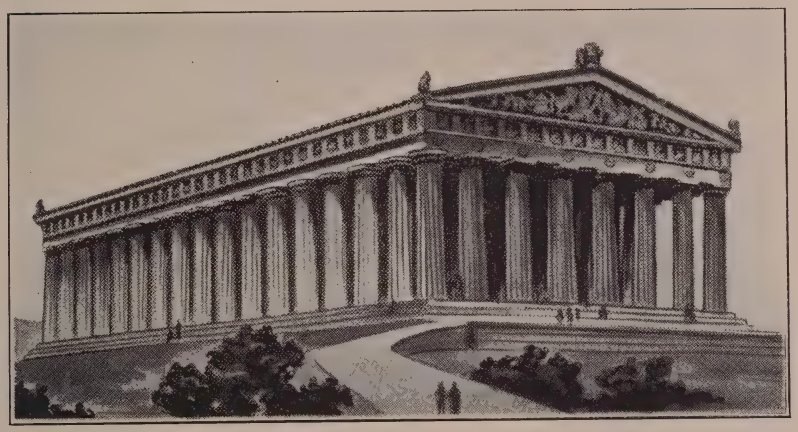
nearly a thousand years; in the fifth century of our era it was converted into a Christian church, and in the fifteenth century into a Mohammedan mosque. The year 1687 proved a disastrous one for the Parthenon. In that year Athens was besieged by the Venetians, and the temple was used by the Turks as a powder-magazine. An explosion took place, and the roof and parts of the walls of the building were destroyed. When the Turks capitulated much damage was done by unsuccessful attempts on the part of the Venetian general to secure the sculptures of the pediments. The work of destruction thus begun went on until the seventh Earl of Elgin, who was appointed British Ambassador at Constantinople in 1799, endeavoured to put a stop to the conversion of the blocks of the Parthenon into walls and its sculptures into lime. In 1801 he gained the permission of the Porte to have the sculptures removed for safety to England. After long delay and many dangers the marbles reached England in safety; and, in 1815, the British Government purchased them from Lord Elgin and placed them in the British Museum, where they are known as the "Elgin Marbles."

The sculptures of the Parthenon are of three kinds:—

(i.) The complete sculptures of the Pediments.
(ii.) The Metopes, in high relief.
(iii.) The Frieze, in low relief.

(i.) *The Sculptures of the Pediments.*—Those of the eastern pediment were designed to tell the miraculous birth of Athena, who "sprang full-armed from the head of Zeus"; and those of the western pediment to tell the story of her contest with Poseidon for the guardianship of the city. From these sculptures we select for illustration the Theseus and the Fates.

The Theseus (Plate IX.).—Nothing more sublime has ever been conceived by an artistic mind, or executed by the



VIII. THE PARTHENON—RESTORED

IX. THESEUS

hand of man; as a rendering of the human figure, combining perfect physical development with grace and dignity, it has been well termed the *ne plus ultra* of the sculptor's art.

The Fates (Plate X.).—To look on these figures is to regret the ravages of time! How beautiful they must have appeared to Pausanias and others

> "Before decay's effacing fingers
> Had swept the lines where beauty lingers."[2]

The grace and rhythm of these figures, and the exquisite rendering of the drapery, are beyond praise; they are the translation into marble of a great conception. Wonderful as are these marbles, more wonderful, we think, the mind of the sculptor in which such ideals had birth!

(ii.) *The Metopes.*[3]—Of all the sculptures of the Parthenon, the Metopes have suffered most. Those on the south side, though more or less mutilated, are the best preserved; and nineteen out of thirty-two are in the British Museum. The Metopes are in high relief, and were mostly designed to contain two figures in deadly conflict. We witness, from those on the south side, the contest between the Lapiths and the Centaurs at the marriage feast of Pirithous—where the intoxicated Centaurs endeavoured to carry off the women. The representation of the Centaur, half-man, half-beast, is an artistic triumph; but the subject is an unpleasant one. Though arresting from many points of view, and especially in the skilful adaptation of the designs to the square fields which they cover, and in the treatment of drapery, the Metopes vary greatly in degree of artistic excellence, and do not possess the charm of the other sculptures of the Parthenon.

[2] Byron: "The Giaour," lines 72-73.

[3] A term given to the spaces between the ends of the beams in the old wooden temples, and represented in the marble temples by marble slabs on which were carved figures in high relief.

Of the nineteen Metopes in the British Museum we reproduce one of the most artistic (Plate XI.). Here the Lapith has a powerful grip of the throat of his antagonist, who is endeavouring in vain to free himself from the deadly clutch. In the right hand of the Lapith, now destroyed, we can imagine some weapon was held with which he is about to give a fatal blow. Screaming terror and horror of approaching death are depicted on the face of the Centaur —a lack of self-control never witnessed on the face of a Greek in the Golden Age of sculpture, when self-control was regarded as the highest virtue and adversity, even the death blow, was met *æquo animo*. The two faces furnish a striking contrast between the fearless temperament of the heroic Greek and the cowardice of the semi-bestial Centaur.

(iii.) *The Frieze.*—Nothing in the world of art possesses a greater charm than the Frieze of the Parthenon. It is truly "a thing of beauty" and "a joy for ever." We shall endeavour to indicate the nature of the procession it portrays. Athena was the guardian deity of Athens, and every fourth year extraordinary preparations were made for a festival in her honour. One day was set apart for a great procession, which started in the lower part of the city and wound its way up towards the summit of the Acropolis. In this procession were priests and priestesses, magistrates, musicians, foot-soldiers, horse-soldiers, charioteers, Athenian maidens of noble birth, wine-bearers, men in charge of sheep and oxen, as well as delegates from Athenian colonies and allied states.

The object of the procession was twofold—to offer up sacrifices to Athena, and to put a new robe on an ancient wooden statue of their guardian deity. This beautiful purple robe was called the Peplos, and was woven by maidens selected for that duty. An idealised representation of this procession was the subject of the sculptured Frieze.

While it is interesting to see some of the marble slabs

x. The Fates

XI. METOPE OF PARTHENON

still *in situ* on the western side of the Parthenon, the greater part of the Frieze is amongst the treasured Elgin Marbles in the British Museum, and there we may feast our eyes on the finest marble relief the world has ever seen.

Our limited space does not permit reference to all the varied personalities and motifs represented on the Frieze, but we select two in illustration.

The Seated Deities.—As all the festivals of the ancient Greeks were part of public worship, it was fitting that the artist should represent the gods on the marble Frieze as witnesses of the procession—holding it, as it were, in review; and thus, on the eastern wall, above the main entrance, the deities are represented calmly sitting and viewing the approach of the Athenians, while they themselves are to be regarded as unseen. For illustration, we select a group of three deities from the eastern Frieze (Plate XII.). There are differences of opinion as to who these are: they are thought to represent Poseidon, Apollo, and Artemis. The faces are well preserved, and there is a wonderful fascination in the grace and repose of the forms and in the rhythm of the folds of drapery.

Horsemen.—The greatest contrast to the calm self-sufficiency of the seated deities is to be found in the sense of rapid motion conveyed in the rush of the Athenian cavalry (Plate XIII.). The horses are beautifully modelled, and seem proud in the display of their strength and speed, while the horsemen ride their fiery steeds with masterful ease. The cavalry covers a continuous series of slabs, which, with one or two exceptions, are still *in situ* on the western Frieze of the Parthenon.

Throughout the ages the marbles of the Parthenon have received the homage of cultured minds. Many modern tributes might here be given; let two suffice.

The great English sculptor Haydon has remarked: "Were the marbles of the Parthenon lost, there would have

been left a gap in art as great as there would have been in philosophy had Newton never lived."

G. F. Watts, one of England's greatest modern painters and sculptors, has acknowledged that the Elgin Marbles were his truest teachers, for from them he received an inspiration which no school could possibly have given him.

Were all else lost, the sculptures of the Parthenon, marked by unity of purpose, variety of motif, and perfection of execution, would remain to convey to all lovers of art a perfect example of that Idealism which is the essential quality of the sculptures of the Golden Age of Greece. To stand before the Elgin Marbles with knowledge and sympathy is to feel in the presence of a divine inspiration. "The great peoples of the past have all had some ideal, by which they have been raised above their fellows. The Jews were raised by their religion, the Romans by their patriotism and love of order, the Greeks by their desire of the beautiful." [4]

[4] Percy Gardner: "The Principles of Greek Art," p. 344.

XII. GROUP OF GODS, FROM FRIEZE OF PARTHENON

XIII. HORSEMEN, FROM FRIEZE OF PARTHENON

CHAPTER V.

The Olympic Games.

> "The Greeks knew that life brought its contest; but they expected from it also the crown of all contests. No proud one . . . only some few leaves of wild olive. Cool to the tired brow, through a few years of peace. It should have been of gold they thought; but Jupiter was poor; this was the best the god could give them."
>
> *Ruskin:* "The Crown of Wild Olive."

GREAT religious festivals, in which Games formed a very important part, took place at different parts of Greece, but those held at Olympia every four years were the oldest and most celebrated. The festival itself lasted for five days, and so important was the event that a whole month was declared sacred throughout Greece, that all might travel safely to and from Olympia. What a spectacle of youth, beauty, and colour must have been presented at the Olympic Games! [1] From distant colonies, and from the islands of the Ægean Sea, delegates came with costly gifts to the temple of Zeus; competitors, selected for skill, strength, and endurance, came to strive for the coveted wreath of wild olive, and thousands of spectators came to witness the various contests. Among the spectators we can well imagine some of those sculptors who have immortalised the art of Greece. Think of the impression on the artistic mind of such a gathering of athletes—the flower of the nation's youth and manhood.

In earlier times, as we read in Homer's "Iliad," the prizes were of considerable value—armour, vases, horses, etc. In later times the only prize at Olympia was a crown of wild olive; at other places we read of a crown of laurel, of parsley,

[1] *Cf.* Smith's "Classical Dictionary."

and of pine. The coveted wreath, however, brought great honour with it, and the victors were held in the highest esteem. Honours and rewards awaited them on their return home; they entered their own city in a triumphal procession, their praises were sung by poets, they were relieved from the payment of taxes, and enjoyed the first seat in all public games; the victorious athletes were national heroes.

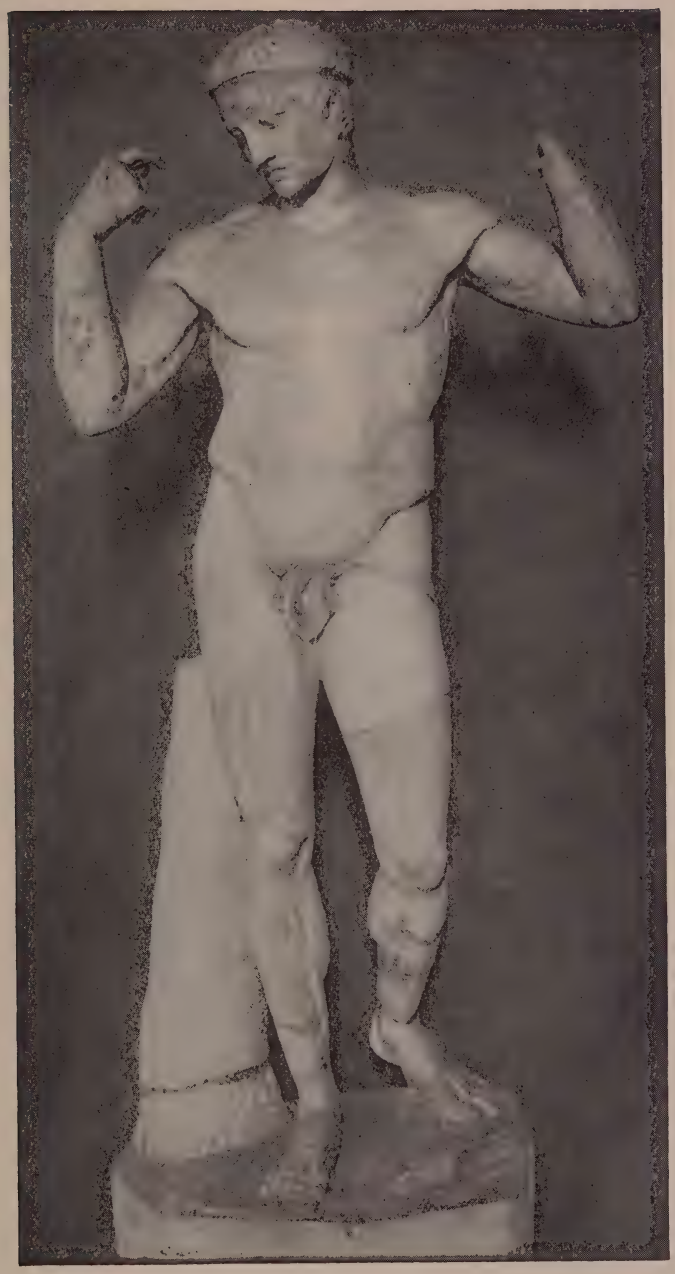
When the sculptor returned to his native city from the great Olympia, and proceeded to create the statue of an athlete, he required no model, nor would he have any particular individual in his mind. His imagination, stimulated by seeing in action the finest representatives of the youth of Greece, would create a mental image in which would be combined the physical qualities of strength, endurance, and grace, as well as mental qualities of a high order. The result, as we may see in the best copies of athletic sculpture which have come down to us, is not portraiture but ideal sculpture.

The names most closely associated with Greek athletic sculpture are Myron, Polyclitus, and Lysippus. Myron and Polyclitus were contemporaries of Phidias, while Lysippus was the court-sculptor of Alexander the Great.

Myron.—This great sculptor meets us on the threshold of the Golden Age; of his works, only two are known to us through copies—the Discobolus and the satyr Marsyas. His Ladas, most famous of all, is only known from literary sources. The youth Ladas was one of the first athletes of his day, and died at the goal after winning the long foot-race at Olympia; his statue is said to have expressed his last supreme effort to reach the goal.

The Discobolus is a well-known statue, and several marble copies exist; we reproduce the one in the National Museum, Rome (Plate XIV.). When we look at this statue we are struck with the attitude of the disc-thrower; the momentary poise before the throw is an arresting feature.

XIV. DISCOBOLUS, AFTER MYRON



XV. DIADUMENUS, AFTER POLYCLITUS

The athlete has swung his right arm back to its greatest limit, and every muscle of the body is ready to take part in a rhythmic movement; we find ourselves anticipating the forward swing, and in imagination see the right arm thrust forward, the figure straightened, and the disc flying through the air. There is no work of Greek art which, in effect, comes nearer an instantaneous photograph.

We see, at a glance, that the Discobolus has no individual traits; it is not a portrait, but the representation of an ideal athlete embodying the typical qualities of his race; the face is refined, the muscles of the body and limbs are delightfully portrayed, and no part is unduly developed. The Discobolus was first an *ideal* in the mind of Myron, who had the genius to embody his creation in bronze.

Polyclitus.—While Polyclitus is best known to us as a sculptor of athletes, we gather from literary sources that his gold and ivory statue of Hera was regarded by his contemporaries and successors as the finest embodiment of grace and majesty achieved by any sculptor in the Golden Age of Greek art. Unfortunately, no trace remains of this great work. We are more fortunate in our knowledge of his athletic sculptures; of these, the two greatest were the Doryphorus and the Diadumenus, both known to us through copies. The Diadumenus (Plate XV.) possesses great charm. The victor is binding about his head the fillet over which the wreath of olive, or of laurel, will be placed. It is an ideal representation of youthful vigour, modesty, and rhythm. The Doryphorus was also known as the Canon, from the system of proportions upon which the statue was modelled. The carefully studied measurements, and relations of the different parts of the body to one another, give the statue a perfection of symmetry which is its most striking characteristic. The strength and heavier build of this athlete afford a striking contrast to the pleasing grace and rhythm of the Diadumenus.

Lysippus.—More than a century later another great sculptor of athletes was born—the famous Lysippus. His most famous statue, known to us through the marble copy in the Vatican, is the Apoxyomenus or Wrestler (Plate XVI.). This athlete is represented scraping the sand and oil from his right arm, presumably after a wrestling contest. There is not in the face of the wrestler the same sense of ideality as we find in the earlier statues of athletes, but rather something approaching to individual expression; the suggestion of elasticity and alertness render the figure most attractive.

That so many famous works in bronze are irretrievably lost is a matter of infinite regret; it is a great satisfaction, however, that from marble copies we may gather impressions which enable us to rank Myron, Polyclitus, and Lysippus amongst the greatest sculptors the world has known.

While a certain approach to individual portraiture in statues is said to have been made when an athlete gained honours for the third time, it may be affirmed that the greatest works of the athletic type known to us are not individual portraits, but ideal representations of the perfect athlete: "they are motives and models from the palæstra transformed and exalted to the highest ideal of physical beauty and strength. They are the most splendid human beings that the art of any period has created." [2]

If beauty, self-control, symmetry, and a system of intellectually directed ethics sum up Greek thought of the fifth century B.C., the Sculptures of the Parthenon, and the athletic sculptures of Myron, Polyclitus, and Lysippus, were perfect embodiments of the ideals of this Golden Age—ideals which have exercised an imperishable influence upon mankind as the highest expression of grace and beauty the world has ever known.

[2] Furtwängler: "Greek and Roman Sculpture," p. 119.

XVI. APOXYOMENUS, AFTER LISIPPUS
(Anderson Photo)

CHAPTER VI.

Greek Mythology.

IN the early dawn, when all the world was young, and ere the secrets of nature had been revealed to man, he gazed in wonder on sun, moon and stars; he marvelled as day succeeded night, and the cold of winter followed on the heat of summer; he feared the thunder and the lightning, and worshipped the sun; every phenomenon of nature was to him the evidence of a supernatural power. Innumerable stories or legends to explain these phenomena gradually took shape; and from these legends we select three that illustrate:—

(i.) The Story of the Seasons—Demeter and Persephone.

(ii.) The Story of the Clouds and the Rain—Niobe and her Daughters.

(iii.) The Story of Day and Night—Orpheus and Eurydice.

(i.) *Demeter and Persephone.*—According to one form of the legend, Demeter, the Goddess of the Earth, dwelt on the island of Sicily. She loved the vales and fields which yielded her their tribute of fruits and flowers; and she loved her beautiful daughter Persephone:—

"Daughter of gods, I rule the earth,
For me the fruits and flowers have birth;
The fragrant rose, the blushing vine,
The glow of flower and leaf is mine;

The verdant vale and fruitful field
To mother earth their tribute yield:
Goddess of Earth and Queen of Flowers,
Mine is the joy of harvest hours.
But sweetest flower of Gods to me
My gentle child, Persephone!
Fairer than rose or lily sweet,
The flowers rejoice her form to greet;
Fairer than dawn when morning breaks,
And Helios' light to life awakes.
O Father Zeus, and consort mine,
Guard her, I pray, my child and thine!" [1]

One morning Persephone wandered away with her companions to gather flowers in the fields of Enna; but morning wore to evening and they did not return. As Helios, the Sun-God, was sinking in the west, Demeter beheld the maidens drawing near, but Persephone was not with them. The maidens did not sing, as was their wont; silent and weeping they drew near, and knelt at Demeter's feet. Then she learnt that in the fields of Enna her daughter had outrun her companions to gather a beautiful narcissus which grew some distance off. Suddenly she vanished from their sight; they cried aloud "Persephone! Persephone!" but only the echo of their voices returned to them—they could find no trace of their companion.

Sadly Demeter dismissed the maidens, and in her grief she cursed the earth:—

"Cursed be the hour that wrought this woe,
And left me, desolate, to mourn;
Cursed be the fruits and flowers of earth
Until Persephone return!" [1]

From the hour Demeter cursed the earth, the trees ceased to put forth their leaves, the flowers to bloom, and the corn to ripen. Refusing to be comforted, she wandered o'er the earth in search of Persephone; in her wanderings she came to

[1] T. M. Davidson: "Demeter and Persephone—Lyric Drama of the Seasons."

XVII. DEMETER, FROM CNIDUS
(W. F. Mansell Photo)

Mount Olympus, and there she appealed to Helios, the Sun-God, to whom all things are revealed. Helios informed Demeter that Persephone had been carried off by Pluto, and was now Queen of Hades. Demeter then appealed to Zeus, the father of gods and men; Zeus, perceiving that all things must die unless the grief of Demeter were assuaged, sent Hermes to bring Persephone to earth again and restore her for a season to her mother. Before Pluto allowed Persephone to leave Hades, he made her eat of a pomegranate, as whoever ate of the fruit of the gods in the lower world, must return to it again.

Seated one evening by the fountain at Eleusis, recalling sweet memories of her daughter, Demeter thought she heard the voice of Persephone borne to her like a whisper on the winds. Listening intently, she heard the voice again. Yes, it was her daughter's voice, and clearly the words fell on her ear:—

"Demeter, Goddess, Mother mine!
I come as bird unto its nest;
There is no joy like love restored,
No shelter like a mother's breast.
Demeter, Mother mine!"

The Goddess of the Earth now saw Persephone running towards her, and soon they were clasped in each other's arms.

With the return of Persephone to earth, the flowers blossomed again, the trees bore fruit, and a rich harvest crowned the fields of Enna. But when Hermes came again to take Persephone back to Hades, where Pluto, her consort, awaited her, the flowers withered and the birds were silent. Thus, ever afterwards, Spring and Summer were associated with the return of Persephone to earth, and Autumn and Winter with the time of her abode in Hades.

The seated Demeter of Cnidus (Plate XVII.) is one of the few Greek originals we now possess. It was discovered at Cnidus, in Asia Minor, in 1858, and brought to the

British Museum. It is supposed to belong to the fourth century B.C.—the age of Praxiteles and Scopas. We see in this statue a departure from the self-contained dignity characteristic of the sculptures of the fifth century: cold intellect gives place to human sympathy; the self-possessed Goddess of the Earth is here revealed as a *mater dolorosa* yearning for her daughter; with certain ideal qualities it is yet, perhaps, the nearest approach in Greek sculpture to that "Soul-expression" which is the chief characteristic of Christian art.

(ii.) *Niobe.*—The phenomena of sunshine, clouds, and rain are told in the story of Niobe and her children. The myth is as follows: Niobe had many beautiful sons and daughters whom everyone admired; but she was unwise, for she taunted the lady Leto who had but two children, Apollo and Artemis, and she boasted that her own children were the fairest on earth. Desire for vengeance filled the heart of Leto; and Apollo, her son, hastened to fulfil her desire. Early in the morning of the ill-fated day the rosy-cheeked children of Niobe wandered forth; Apollo, the Sun-God, beheld them from the mountain-top, and swiftly drew his bow; with unerring aim the darts found their resting-place in the hearts of Niobe's children, and the mocking voice of Apollo was heard, "Go now, and boast of your children's beauty!" Then were Niobe's eyes blinded with tears as she sought in vain to protect her loved ones; the chill of death swept over her heart, and she turned into stone.

One interpretation of the myth is as follows:—Apollo is the Sun-God, and his darts are the sun's rays; the children of Niobe are the clouds, which, when struck with the darts of the morning light, turn crimson and are dispersed; the tears of the weeping Niobe are the rain drops from the clouds which are turned into ice on the summits of the snowy mountains.

The original of the group Niobe and her youngest

XVIII. NIOBE
(Alinari Photo)

daughter (Plate XVIII.), now in the Uffizi Gallery at Florence, formed part of a number of statues which are supposed to have adorned a tomb or a temple in Cilicia in Asia Minor. The group is thought to have been executed in the fourth century B.C.

Here, as in the face of Demeter, the ideal majesty of the fifth century sculpture is subdued by the pathos of motherhood, and the dignity of a queen softened by the tender emotions of love and suffering. The youngest daughter has run to her mother's arms; two things arrest our attention in the mother's attitude—the uplifted arm, and the upward glance. In the first, she seeks to protect her child from an impending blow, and in the second, we may read an appeal to a supreme power to intervene and save her offspring.

(iii.) *Orpheus and Eurydice.*—If we were asked to name a piece of Greek sculpture which embodies in a high degree a calm acceptance of fate and a masterful control of the deepest emotions, we should select the bas-relief of Orpheus and Eurydice. The sculptor of this beautiful work is unknown, and the date is uncertain. There are three copies of this lost relief, but the one in Naples is thought to be the best (Plate XIX.). The three figures are Orpheus on the right; the youthful Hermes, the messenger of the gods and guide of departed spirits, on the left; while Eurydice occupies the central position.

We think this the finest example of disciplined emotion ever portrayed in marble. Shakespeare sings the power of Orpheus' lute:—

> "Orpheus with his lute made trees,
> And the mountain tops that freeze,
> Bow themselves, when he did sing;
> To his music, plants and flowers
> Ever sprung; as sun and showers
> There had made a lasting spring."[2]

[2] "King Henry VIII.," Act. III., Scene i.

The sweet singer had lost his wife Eurydice through the bite of a serpent. Sorrowful and lonely he wandered through the earth, and wherever he went nature responded to the charm of his music. At last he was granted permission to descend into Hades; the gates of Hell swung open, and Cerberus, the three-headed monster, crouched as he passed, so entrancing was the power of his music:

> "He sung, and hell consented
> To hear the Poet's prayer;
> Stern Proserpine relented,
> And gave him back the fair.
> Thus song could prevail
> O'er death and o'er hell,
> A conquest how hard and how glorious!
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Yet music and love were victorious." [3]

Orpheus gained permission from Pluto and his consort Proserpine to lead Eurydice out of Hades on condition that he would not look back until he had reached the upper world.

To the sound of music Orpheus turned his face earthwards, Eurydice following her lover. In a moment of intense curiosity, and ere yet they had emerged into the light of day, Orpheus broke his vow and looked back to see if Eurydice were following him; that is the moment depicted on the relief. Hermes, the messenger of fate, gently touches the arm of Eurydice to remind her that he was compelled to lead her back to Pluto's realm. Orpheus is to lose Eurydice, and not until he joins her in the abode of Hades will he see her again. How tenderly the deepest emotions are here suggested. Eurydice's hand rests lightly on the shoulder of Orpheus, while he removes her veil that he may gaze again into the eyes of his beloved. In these simple gestures and loving looks they take their last farewell. There is no violent

[3] Pope: "Ode on St. Cecilia's Day," line 83.

XIX. THE ORPHEUS RELIEF

grief, and no loss of self-control; the artistic restraint adds pathos and dignity to the scene.

The myth of Orpheus and Eurydice is also a solar legend: it invests the phenomena of the dawn, the sunshine, and the night, with anthropomorphic interest. Eurydice is the lovely dawn when the flowers awake, and the sparkling dew still lies on the sleeping vales; she is stung by the serpent of the night, and descends to Hades. Orpheus, the sun, descends to the lower regions, and leads Eurydice up towards the light; he turns to look upon her, and his own brightness destroys her—the dawn vanishes as the morning sun shines out in splendour.

In the examples we have selected from the myths of ancient Greece, embodied in marble during the Golden Age of Greek art, we see a pervading anthropomorphism and every phenomenon unfolded is a drama of human interest. The gods and goddesses identified with the varied phenomena of nature have not only a human form, they are endowed with ideal majesty and grace; and, where grief and sorrow are found, they are never beyond the control of a calm and chastened discipline.

CHAPTER VII.

"In Death a Hero."

WE have already remarked on the reserve, dignity, and self-control which characterise the sculptures of the Golden Age of Greece. Did the sculptors then avoid all reference to the subjects of sorrow, parting, and death? For here, if anywhere, we would naturally look for emotional and individual expression—difficult to idealise! Fortunately for our study of this question, many sculptures and tombstones are available.

In the sculptured warriors on the walls of temples, and on tombstones, we find a reflection of the heroic element in the Greek temperament—heroism in the face of death—as told in song and story; and on many tombstones we find a reflection of the calm and undismayed attitude of mind with which the women of Greece faced the hour of parting from their loved ones.

Æginetan Sculpture.—"In death a hero, as in life a friend"[1] finds no better embodiment than in the sculptures from the pediments of the temple of Aphæa at Ægina. Here may be seen the disciplined courage of manhood, friend rescuing friend, and heroes conquering the agony of death.

Æginetan sculptures have not the charm of the sculptures of the Parthenon; they are earlier and belong to the archaic period of sculpture, but they furnish examples of the best archaic art—an art struggling to perfection: "they are the buds which expanded and blossomed into the highest art."[2]

[1] Pope's "Iliad," Book XVII., line 758.
[2] Furtwängler: "Greek and Roman Sculpture," p. 15.

XX. THE DYING WARRIOR, FROM PEDIMENT AT AEGINA
(Bruckmann Photo)

The Dying Warrior.—The most striking figure of the Æginetan sculptures is the Dying Warrior of the eastern pediment (Plate XX.). The rhythm of the figure is perfect; every part of the physical frame is subordinate to a disciplined mind, and the sculptor has rendered the death struggle with wonderful artistic reserve. The Dying Warrior has often been referred to as the embodiment of that Stoicism which enabled the Greek to conquer fate.

A study of this figure recalls the lines of Byron on the Dying Gaul:—

> "He leans upon his hand—his manly brow
> Consents to death, but conquers agony."

The warrior is mortally wounded, and, "while the mortal mist is gathering," he bears himself like a hero—with no abandonment to grief or tears. That he suffers pain is evident from the clenched teeth and drawn lips; but evident also is the mastery of the mind over physical weakness.

Tombstones.—To stand on the Acropolis of Athens and survey the ruins of a departed glory is to be filled with unspeakable regrets; on the other hand, to pass through the Ceramicus, the burial-ground which lay outside the gates of the city, and to look on the stelæ still standing, is to rejoice that here one may see some of the undevastated sculptures of the Golden Age of Greece. What do we gather from a study of these tombstones? This much, that death is seldom, if ever, referred to in a direct manner. On some of the stelæ, or tombstones, parting is indicated by the clasping of hands; but, as a rule, there is no suggestion of the last enemy, and no excessive grief on the part of mourning friends. Instead, the departed are usually represented as they were known in life—engaged in some ordinary task, or in the exercise of some particular calling.

We may still read the names of those to whose memories they were erected; but when we look into the sculptured

faces we realise at once that the figures are not portraits, but idealised types—a form of sculpture in keeping with the best traditions of Greek art. We select for illustration the tombstone of the lady Hegeso (Plate XXI.). The figures are exquisitely modelled; the lady is seated, and has just taken a jewel from a box brought by her maid. This doubtless represents a scene often enacted in the daily life of the deceased lady. There is no indication or symbol of death; it is simply an idealised representation of a beautiful woman, by means of which her memory would be treasured by those who loved her. Considering how few original works we possess of the best Greek art, these sculptured tombstones are of considerable importance; they reflect the excellence of the best period, as well as the serenity with which death was viewed by the Greek mind; "they are free from all painful expression and from all exaggerated sentiment, but full of the poetry of the life of simple duty and natural affection." [3]

[3] Percy Gardner: "Principles of Greek Art," p. 66.

XXI. TOMBSTONE OF HEGESO

CHAPTER VIII.

Victory.

> "That man is little to be envied whose patriotism would not gain force upon the plain of Marathon."
>
> *Samuel Johnson.*

IF we were confronted for the first time with the knowledge that during the space of about fifty years an ancient city had sprung from ruins to enduring fame, and that the architecture, sculpture, and literature of that period were of such excellence as to exercise an influence upon civilisation for all time, we should be curious to learn what extraordinary impulses had produced these wonderful results.

"Athens, the eye of Greece, mother of arts and eloquence,"[1] corresponds to the city we have described. In 480 B.C., Athens was a ruined city; a generation later, magnificent temples crowned the summit of its hill; sculptures, unsurpassed for beauty, adorned its temples and streets; dramas, still read to-day in every University in the world where Western civilisation is cherished, were acted in their great public theatres—truly an efflorescence of genius without parallel in the history of the world.

What were the impulses which called forth such achieve-

[1] Milton: "Paradise Regained," Book IV., line 240.

ments? Doubtless there were several; but the most outstanding was the victory which the Greeks achieved over their Persian foes.

A people's struggle in defence of home and liberty has often been told in song and story; but the victory of the Greeks over their Asiatic foe was celebrated in stone as well as in story; it was in the joy of a great deliverance that Athens became "the mother of arts and eloquence."

Let us recall some of the incidents of the great struggle which proved such a stimulus to the genius of the Greek.[2]

In the fifth century B.C. Persia had become a very powerful kingdom. She had gradually extended her borders westward towards Europe, and the conquest of Greece seemed only a matter of time. In 493 B.C., the Persian King Darius made his first attempt to invade Greece; the attempt was a disastrous one, as the Persian fleet was completely wrecked rounding the Cape of Mount Athos.

Marathon.—Three years later Darius again attempted the conquest of Greece. He succeeded in landing 100,000 men on the plain of Marathon, about twenty miles from Athens, and the small Athenian army looked down upon them from the slope of an adjacent hill. The Persians, under Darius, had proved invincible in their conflicts with their Asiatic foes, and they outnumbered the Athenians by ten to one. So certain were they of the issue that they had brought a huge block of marble with them to mark the site of the battle, and on which to record their victory.

It was a desperate hour for Greece, but the hour brought the man. Miltiades, by his counsel, proved the saviour of his country. Before engaging in battle the Athenians were reminded that on the issue of the conflict depended the fate of their country and all they held dear. Victory meant freedom, and the salvation of their country; defeat meant slavery, and degradation worse than death.

[2] *Cf.* Smith's "The Students' Greece," Chaps. xvii.-xx.

At Marathon "the stars in their courses" fought against the Persians as against Sisera of old. The Greeks obtained a glorious victory!

> "The flying Mede, his shaftless, broken bow;
> The fiery Greek, his red pursuing spear;
> Mountain above, earth's, ocean's plain below,
> Death in the front, destruction in the rear!
> Such was the scene."[3]

The battle of Marathon was one of the most decisive in the history of the world. If the Persians had won that battle, the influence of Greek thought on European civilisation would probably have been lost, and the Golden Age of Pericles, with its enduring influence on the thought of the world, had never been!

Thermopylæ.—Ten years later Xerxes, son of Darius, determined to conquer Greece. His army is said to have numbered a million men, and his fleet greatly outnumbered that of the Greeks. His soldiers crossed the Hellespont on a bridge of boats. As they marched towards Athens they were held at bay for a few days at the pass of Thermopylæ. There Leonidas, with his three hundred Spartan soldiers and seven hundred Thespians, died rather than retreat. They found a grave at Thermopylæ and an enduring place upon the roll of fame.

"This deed of the Greeks, which has become the type of unselfish and noble soldiership to all lands and to all times, was commemorated on the tomb of those who gave their lives to do it in the most pathetic, so far as I know or can feel, of all human utterances: 'Oh, stranger, go and tell our people that we are lying here, having obeyed their words.'"[4]

The Persian army soon reached Athens and reduced it to ruins; most of the inhabitants had previously escaped to adjacent islands, and the few who remained were quickly put to death.

[3] Byron: "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage," Canto II., Stanza xc.
[4] Ruskin: "The Crown of Wild Olive."

Salamis.—The complete subjugation of Greece seemed a matter of a few days. The Greek fleet had either to surrender or be crushed—so thought the proud Xerxes; but he little knew the humiliation that awaited him! In the bay of Salamis the Greek ships were practically surrounded by the Persian fleet, and their destruction seemed certain; but again the hour of need brought the deliverer. As Miltiades at Marathon, so Themistocles at Salamis, by his skilful leadership, proved the deliverer of his country. Xerxes, it is said, sat on a throne of marble overlooking the bay. When the battle began the number of the Persian ships in the narrow place proved their ruin; the Greeks fought bravely, and to the horror of Xerxes he saw hundreds of his ships destroyed and the remainder put to flight:—

> "A king sat on the rocky brow
> Which looks o'er sea-born Salamis;
> And ships, by thousands, lay below,
> And men in nations;—all were his!
> He counted them at break of day—
> And when the sun set, where were they?" [5]

Xerxes, his pride humbled and his ambitions shattered, was compelled to retreat into Asia. In the following summer his army suffered defeat at Platæa, and the remainder of his fleet was destroyed at Mykale.

Thus ended the Persian invasion; the Greeks had conquered their foes. They ascribed their victory to their patron goddess, who had inspired their leaders with wisdom and their soldiers with courage. To Athena, therefore, it was fitting they should dedicate their genius in the reconstruction of Athens.

It will ever be a matter of thanksgiving to every civilised people that those extraordinary ideals and activities of the Greeks, and particularly of the Athenians, which were called forth in defence of home and country, should have been

[5] Byron: "The Isles of Greece," v. 4.

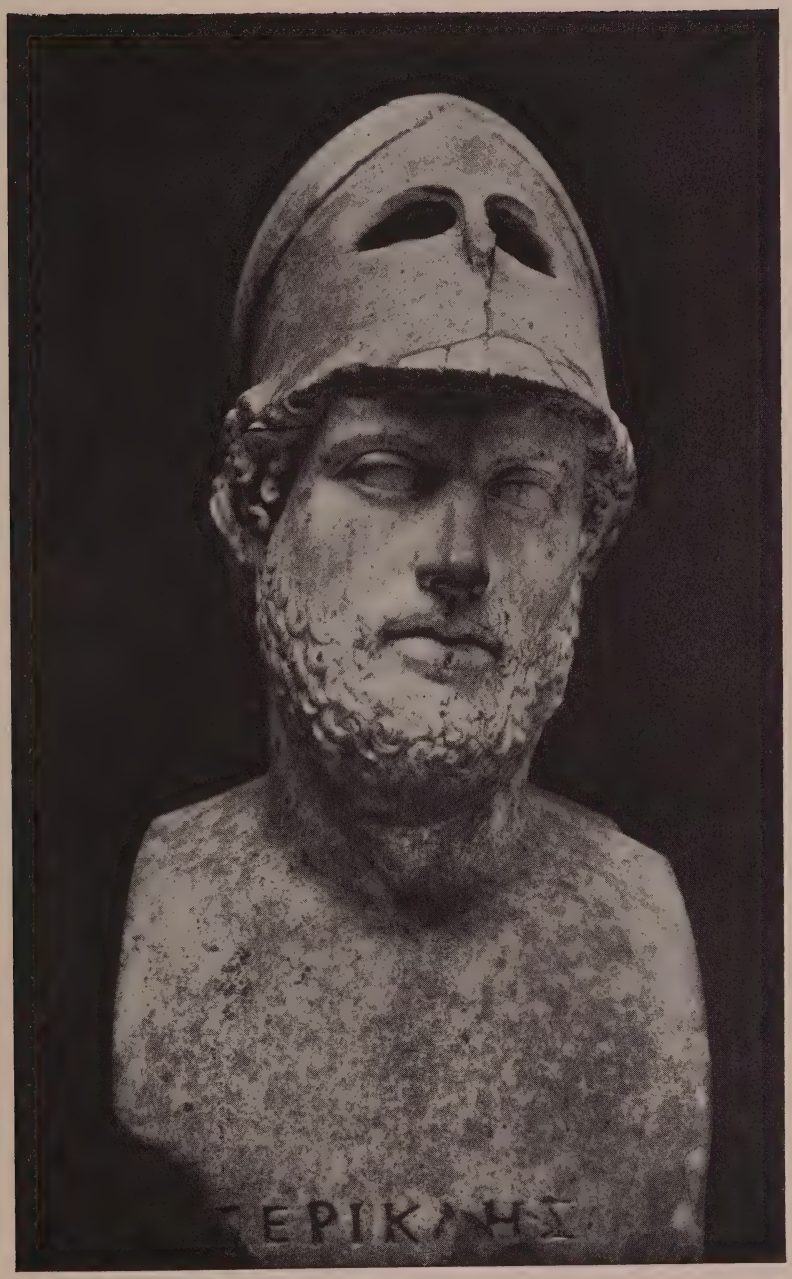
saved for the culture of future civilisations. Think what possible directions these activities might have taken after victory had been gained and liberty assured! They might have rolled on in greed of further conquest and lust of blood; or they might have expended themselves in ease, luxury, and dissipation—foes more to be dreaded than an outward enemy. Fortunately, through the influence of Pericles, the genius of the Athenians was directed for almost a generation into paths of peace, and forces were made to co-operate towards a common end, the rebuilding of a beautiful city. In this work the Athenians rediscovered themselves; it was a Renaissance; every joy of life was more keenly felt because it had been threatened; and in the wave of a new enthusiasm the genius of the most cultured Greeks was laid upon the altar of the common good, and found a perfect and inimitable expression in the art and literature of the Golden Age.

CHAPTER IX.

The Greatest Statesman of Antiquity—Pericles.

> "In the Greek art of the age of Pericles we see the Greek nation—the splendour of success, the rejoicing in victory, the love of beauty, and the enjoyment of leisure after effort."
>
> *G. F. Watts.*

ON the threshold of the Elgin Room of the British Museum is a bust on a pedestal; it greets you, as it were, on entering that room within which are some of the greatest art treasures of the world. Who is this who seems to keep watch and ward over the marbles of the Parthenon? It is Pericles, the Athenian statesman. Well may his bust occupy this place of honour, for it was he whose inspiration gave direction and unity of purpose to the genius of the Golden Age; his ideals of citizenship became the ideals of contemporary poets, architects, and sculptors; and the Parthenon itself, with its unrivalled sculptures, embodied the dreams of the statesman. We must therefore endeavour to realise the ideals of Pericles if we are to appreciate fully the Idealism of Greek art, for the sculptors of the Golden Age were spurred on by the statesman, who, in the service of religion and the State, provided them with opportunities not only of beautifying their city, but of enriching the thought of the world.



XXII. PERICLES
(W. F. Mansell Photo)

Pericles was born in Athens about 500 B.C., and died of the plague in his sixty-fifth year. As a boy he witnessed the desolation of Athens by the Persians; as a youth he served both in the army and the navy; and when he came to manhood he became the chief statesman of Athens and the leader of the democratic party.

Although Pericles belonged by birth to an aristocratic family, his talents and his influence were used in the interests of the common people. His aim was "to take the sting from poverty and the charm from wealth," and this aim he sought to realise by the following means:—

(1) He employed the greatest sculptors of his age in beautifying the city so that rich and poor alike might come under the influence of beautiful works of art.

(2) He encouraged the drama, and used it as a means of elevating the people.

To the Athenians the theatre was a sacred place, and the dramas there represented were really part of public worship. By means of the drama the people were educated in the religion and history of their country, and in moral ideas. In the figures and scenes brought before them they were made to realise that the gods punish pride; that every offence against purity and righteousness entails suffering; and that the sins of the fathers are visited on their children and their children's children.

(3) Pericles introduced payment for public service, and made it possible for all classes of citizens to act as jurors.

In such ways Pericles made sure that poverty alone, should not preclude any citizen from taking a share in the administration of the city's affairs, and should be no barrier to the full enjoyment of everything that genius could provide.

Two very pertinent questions might here be asked:—

(1) From what source did Pericles obtain the wealth to

rebuild Athens? In the public treasury were funds the Allies of Athens had subscribed for the purpose of resisting the Persians. The need no longer existed, and Pericles used the money to make Athens the centre of the intellectual life of Greece.

(2) How did it come that Athenian citizens could have so much leisure? This privilege depended largely on the existence of a system of slavery. "Slavery allowed the citizen an amount of leisure without which it would have been impossible. While the slave was at work, the master was in the Ecclesia, or in the law-courts, or in the market-place, or in one of the numerous porticoes. Without the opportunities thus afforded the Periclean constitution could not have existed." [1]

By the historian Thucydides the ideals of Pericles have been enshrined for us, in what are believed to be his own words. The occasion was the funeral oration pronounced by Pericles over those who had fallen in the first year of the Peloponnesian War (431 B.C.), and whose bones, according to custom, were buried in the Ceramicus. In this oration, which has been described as "one of the noblest monuments of antiquity," we read:—

"Such is the city for which these men have given their lives, whose obsequies we have met to celebrate. Her praises are theirs, for it is they, and such as they, who have made her what she is. . . . Look round on this glorious city. Think of her mighty empire. Let the love of her beauty sink into your souls, and when you contemplate her greatness remember that it was by the daring deeds of her citizens, done in the cause of duty and honour, that she was raised to this glorious height. Even when their efforts failed they remained faithful to the death, giving their lives, when nothing else was left to give. Their reward is worthy of

[1] Evelyn Abbott: "Pericles," p. 343.

them. Their glory shall never die; their ashes rest where we have laid them, but the whole wide world is their sepulchre; their epitaphs are written in the hearts of mankind; and wherever there is speech of noble deeds their names are held in remembrance. To men who fall as they have fallen death is no evil." [2]

The restoration of Athens after its destruction by the Persians required not only wealth, marble, labour, and genius; it required the inspiration of a personality which would lead the citizens of Athens to unite in their ideals. Marble was abundant in the quarries of Mount Pentelicus; there was wealth in the treasury; genius abounded in Athens; and, fortunately for the abiding influence of Greek art and literature, the affairs of the city were for a time under the administration of a statesman with a genius for inspiring and guiding the genius of others. To Phidias, the master sculptor of the age, to the architect Ictinus, and to the builder Callicrates, Pericles entrusted the restoration of the city. Their greatest achievement was the erection of the Parthenon. Pericles desired that this temple should embody the highest ideals of the Athenians. It was to be a worthy shrine for the statue of Athena.

Steadily the temple of gleaming marble rose upon the hill, and shapeless blocks from the quarries were fashioned with consummate skill until the temple, embodying the vision of architect, builder, sculptor, and statesman, stood complete, and was dedicated to the Goddess of Wisdom.

The bust of Pericles, which we reproduce, is the one in the British Museum (Plate XXII.). It is thought to be a copy of the original statue by Cresilas which was set up on the Acropolis during the lifetime of Pericles. It is not regarded by critics as a portrait statue, but as an ideal representation of a Greek statesman. "The sculptors of the Parthenon did not make a portrait of Pericles, or of the

[2] Thuc., ii., 34-46. See Jowett's translation.

heroes of Marathon, but had in view a reference to their distinguishing qualities; natural conditions affording them the happy chance of producing an idealistic effect without departing from present fact."[3]

This reference to the idealised portrait of Pericles raises the question: Was the Golden Age altogether devoid of realistic portraiture? So far as we may judge it may be said that, generally speaking, such portraiture was against the spirit of the Golden Age. Besides the idealised portrait of Pericles, we may cite the famous statue of Sophocles in the Lateran Museum, Rome—supposed to be from an original about the middle of the fourth century, and described as one of the finest ideal portraits in the world.

On the other hand, straight from the very heart of the Golden Age, we have a realistic portrait of the great tragedian Euripedes (National Museum, Naples)—a notable exception to the idealistic tendency of fifth century sculpture. Realistic portraiture comes into prominence towards the close of the fourth century B.C., and is the chief characteristic of the Græco-Roman period.

We have represented the life of the ancient Greeks in the time of Pericles at its best. There were blots upon its civilisation as there are upon our own, but we do not think it would be profitable to dwell upon these in our present sketch of Pericles. Reference must be made to fuller sources.[4]

Thus far we have endeavoured to show:—

(1) That Idealism is the essential feature of the art of the Golden Age of Greece.

(2) That the influences which led the Greeks to idealise the human form were mainly two:—

(i.) Anthropomorphism—the traditional and poetic conception of Greek deities as majestic men and women.

[3] G. F. Watts.
[4] *Cf.* "Plutarch's Lives"; and "Pericles"—Evelyn Abbott.

(ii.) The effect of the Olympic Games upon the artistic temperament of the Greeks.

(3) That the joy of a great deliverance was the chief impulse in the dedication of Greek genius, and

(4) That the guidance of that genius towards the realisation of a great ideal was the work of Pericles.

We leave the study of Greek art as we would leave a sanctuary. Beauty, grace, rhythm, and harmony are worthy of worship; intellectual worship it may be—the homage of the mind rather than the heart; but to have been influenced by the vision of Greek sculptors towards the appreciation of the "things that are lovely, and of good report," is to be enriched in one's spiritual life. The thought of such an influence recalls the memorable words of Dr. Samuel Johnson when he looked upon the ruins of Iona:—"Whatever withdraws us from the power of the senses, whatever makes the past, the distant, or the future predominate over the present, advances us in the dignity of thinking beings."

CHAPTER X.

"For Time, Theirs—Ours, for Eternity."

IN the realm of sculpture, the two greatest art periods in the world—the age of Phidias and the age of Michelangelo—are separated in time by an interval of nearly two thousand years.

The motif of Greek Art, in the Golden Age, was to embody in marble the beauty and grace of the human form—endowing it with what was the current conception of godlike qualities, and with a mental attitude of self-sufficiency undisturbed by the problems of the soul.

How great the contrast in the motif of Christian art! The birth at Bethlehem, the Gospel of love and self-denial, the Cross on Calvary, and the heroic lives and martyrdom of saints revolutionised the world of thought and brought new motifs into the realm of art.

From the physical standpoint Greek art is perfect, for Greek ideals were capable of being embodied in marble:—

> "When Greek art ran and reached the goal,
> Thus much had the world to boast *in fructu*." [1]

In the stadium the successful wrestler and fighter received the crown of wild olive from an earthly judge, and to the runner the goal was ever in sight. The Discobolus, the Apoxyomenus, and the Diadumenus not only proclaim the importance of physical culture in the life of the Greek, but, also, that the diadem, the crown of effort, is attainable here and now.

Christian ideals, on the other hand, stretch out into the infinite—they are spiritual, ever being pursued, but never

[1] Browning: "Old Pictures in Florence," Stanza XI., lines 3-4.

XXIII. THE VISITATION—CHARTRES CATHEDRAL

XXIV. THE VISITATION—CHARTRES CATHEDRAL

attained. The Christian sculptor looked on a wider arena than the Greek; he looked out on the arena of life, where the fighting, the wrestling, and the running never cease, and where the crown for the victor's brow—not of corruptible leaves of olive or of pine, but a crown of righteousness—is reserved till the earthly race is run and conflicts cease.

Another striking contrast in Greek and Christian art is the treatment of the child. The child had little or no attraction for the Greek sculptor, and his representation of the child, apart from the infant Dionysus, is hardly worth noting. The Golden Age had no Luca della Robbia to interpret the joy of childhood. In Christian Art, on the other hand, we have the apotheosis of the child; the Madonna worships the babe Jesus; "Kings from a far land draw near and behold Him," and the gladness of little children is the theme of many a Christian sculptor.

With such contrasts in our minds we cannot hope to find in Christian art that charm of physical beauty and tranquil self-sufficiency which we find in Greek marbles, or an idealism which portrays man with the dignity of Zeus or Apollo, and woman with the charm of Aphrodite or Athena. Instead we get the Kingdom of Heaven brought nigh to us in the smiles of little children, and glimpses of the restless, aspiring, invisible soul of man illuminating a body ofttimes worn and emaciated through self-denial and the fierceness of the conflict within.

"On which I conclude, that the early painters
To cries of 'Greek art and what more wish you?'
Replied 'To become now self-acquainters,
And paint man, man, whatever the issue!

Make new hopes shine through the flesh they fray,
New fears aggrandize the rags and tatters;
To bring the invisible full into play!
Let the visible go to the dogs—what matters?'"[2]

[2] Browning: "Old Pictures in Florence," Stanza XIX.

"To bring the invisible full into play"—was the theme of Christian sculpture.

To follow the evolution of Christian art from the Catacombs of Rome to the glory of the Italian Renaissance is a most interesting study; but, for our purpose, we shall content ourselves with a brief reference to the subject under the heads of Gothic and Italian sculpture respectively:—

(i.) *Gothic Art.*—Gothic Art had its birth in France. In the twelfth century a great awakening took place in that country, and spread throughout Europe. The spirit of man broke the chains of mediæval restrictions, and manifested its genius and vitality in many directions and notably in the foundation of Universities and Guilds: and the intense religious fervour of the times found expression not only in the Crusades, but also through the Guilds and Crafts, and in the erection of cathedrals to the glory of God—those marvellous structures which have enriched the world by the consecration of genius to noble ideals.

In the ornamentation of French cathedrals Gothic sculpture of the thirteenth century ranks with Greek sculpture as the crown of architecture. In the sculptures of the Parthenon and other temples the Greek learned the history of his country, the traditions of his race, and the heroic deeds of his ancestors. So in Gothic sculpture "Christianity supplied an epic interest and human meaning." Its aim, as "visible speech," was to tell the story of the Bible in stone—the story of the Creation, of Noah and the Deluge, the portrayal of prophets, priests, and kings with their respective symbols of office: and greatest of all themes—the story of Jesus Christ from the Annunciation to the Cross, the judgment after death, the weighing of souls, and the separation of the Blest from the Lost: these, along with the representation of Virtues and Vices, Times and Seasons, were the subjects of Gothic art. Its sculptures—not to be compared with Greek sculpture in the representation of physical beauty—were

XXV. BEAU DIEU D'AMIENS

XXVI. SIMEON—REIMS CATHEDRAL
(N.D. Photo)

marvellous in their "Soul-expression." They were carved, be it remembered, not in gleaming marble, but in the building stone of the cathedral of which they formed a part.

From the great galaxy of Gothic sculpture we make the following selection:—

Cathedral of Chartres.

(i.) *The Visitation* (Plate XXIII.).—What loving sympathy in each other's welfare is expressed in these two faces; and how kindly the mutual welcome is expressed in clasp and embrace. It is truly a marvellous thing to find such "Soul-expression" embodied in rough building-stone. To study the façade of a Gothic cathedral with hundreds of such sculptures, and to think of all the spiritual ideals embodied in them, is to be "lost in wonder, love, and praise!"

(ii.) *The Visitation* (Plate XXIV.).—Here we find the same subject at a later period, and treated with great delicacy and refinement.

Cathedral of Amiens.

Beau Dieu d'Amiens (Plate XXV.).—"Of the statue of Christ, itself, I will not speak here at length, as no sculpture would satisfy, or ought to satisfy, the hope of any living soul that has learned to trust in Him; but at the time it was beyond what till then had been reached in sculptured tenderness, and was known far and near as the 'Beau Dieu d'Amiens.'"[3]

Cathedral of Rheims.

(i.) *Simeon* (Plate XXVI.).—This statue is from the "Presentation Group" on the west front of the Cathedral. Four figures represent the group—Joseph, Mary, Simeon, and Anna: of these the most arresting figure is the aged Simeon; the tenderness and expectation of his soul are written on this beautifully carved face. Here we see "the

[3] Ruskin: "The Bible of Amiens."

invisible brought into play"; the inspired sculptor has embodied the vision of the aged Simeon in wearied longing, sympathy, and satisfaction of soul in the realisation of his dreams:—

> "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word: For mine eyes have seen Thy salvation."[4]

(ii.) *The Angel of Rheims* (Plate XXVII.).—This well-known figure from the central porch is a beautiful work—eloquent in grace, rhythm, and human sympathy.

Cathedral of Bourges.

S. Michael Weighing Souls (Plate XXVIII.).—This is part of "The Last Judgment," west front, central porch. S. Michael is a commanding figure, and by his side stands a charming youth. What a contrast in the scenes on either side—on the right of S. Michael we see the Blessed exulting; while on his left the Lost are being driven by the devils into perdition.

It is with some reluctance we leave the study of Gothic art, as "the Bible in Stone"; no other art in the world is so intensely religious, or has served such a great educational purpose. In the dedication of high ideals to service the work of Gothic builders and sculptors in the thirteenth century ranks with the chivalry of the Crusaders and the serious devotion to learning in the newly founded Universities.

Gothic sculpture ranks with Greek sculpture in its architectural qualities—forming part of a great unity in the mind of the master builder; "in both (Greek and Gothic sculpture) the subject matter is of high epic character, and the workmanship worthily answers to the intention; each takes its place as the crown of architecture."[5]

[4] Luke ii. 29-30.
[5] Lethaby: "Mediæval Art," p. 215.

XXVII. ANGEL OF REIMS
(A. G. Photo)

XXVIII. S. MICHAEL WEIGHING SOULS—BOURGES CATHEDRAL

In the art quality of "Soul-expression" Gothic sculptures transcend all other sculptures in the world; for they were carved, as the Cathedrals themselves were built, by the hands of faith, and for generations were a source of spiritual quickening to the simple, devout, and illiterate worshippers who gazed upon them.

(ii.) *Italian Art.*—The year 1260 is a memorable one in the history of Italian art, for in that year Niccola Pisano—inspired by the sight of heroic and nude figures carved on a Græco-Roman sarcophagus (Plate XXIX.)—erected his famous pulpit in the Baptistery at Pisa, and in so doing broke the fetters of Byzantine convention and gained enduring fame. In the five reliefs of the hexagonal pulpit—representing the Nativity, the Adoration, the Presentation, the Crucifixion, and the Last Judgment—we have the birth of the Italian Renaissance in Art. For illustration we select the Nativity (Plate XXX.) and Adoration (Plate XXXI.).

In 1266 a new inspiration came into Niccola Pisano's life, namely, the influence of Gothic art—an influence doubtless derived from the Gothic sculptures of French cathedrals. The octagonal pulpit at Sienna was the result. From this pulpit we select the relief of the Nativity (Plate XXXII.). Here are figures which might well have been inspired by the sculptures of Chartres, Amiens, Bourges, Rouen, or Rheims; they are the finest embodiment of the innocence of childhood and the pathos of motherhood which the world possesses in marble.

As the herald of the Italian Renaissance, Niccola Pisano will be held in remembrance by all true lovers of art. Where, for centuries, there had been stagnation, the breath of liberty now blew through the world of art; genius, uncontrolled, was free to return to the study of nature, and to interpret its beauty, simplicity, and truth; though still the handmaiden of religion, art was no longer fettered, she had been

born again into a newness and a greatness of life, hitherto unknown. By his courage as a pioneer, and by his extraordinary genius and achievements, Niccola Pisano enabled all who followed him to express in terms of naturalness their conception of God's dealings with man, the joy of daily labour, and the dedication of effort to the glory of God, the charm of motherhood and childhood, the heroic lives of saints, their belief in the ultimate triumph of good over evil, and, in the sleep of death, the hope of an eternal dawn.

From the great sculptors of Italy and their works, we make the following further selection:—

(1) *Giotto* (1276-1337).—Giotto is known to fame as one of the greatest painters of the early Renaissance. Giotto's share in the building of the Campanile of Florence (often referred to as the "Shepherd's Tower") has been well discussed; the bas-reliefs at the base of the Tower are judged to have been designed by Giotto and executed by Andrea Pisano and his pupils, but Ruskin ascribes the execution of some of them to Giotto himself. "Read but those inlaid jewels of Giotto once with patient following, and your hour's study will give you strength for all your life." [6]

From the twenty-seven reliefs which represent the creation of man and the various occupations of mankind, we select the following:—

(i.) Creation of Man.
(ii.) Weaving.
(iii.) Ploughing.

(i.) *Creation of Man* (Plate XXXIII.).—"Scarcely disengaged from the clods of the earth, man opens his eyes to the face of Christ. It is the continual state of man, 'of the earth'—yet ever looking into the face of God." The trees

XXIX. GRÆCO-ROMAN SARCOPHAGUS

XXX. PANEL OF PULPIT, PISA

are symbolic—"the Palm (above Christ), the symbol of immortal Life; the Oak (above Adam), the symbol of human life: Fruit Trees complete the myth of the Food of Life." [6]

(ii.) *Weaving* (Plate XXXIV.).—"Of extreme loveliness, the stooping face of the woman at the loom is more like a Leonardo drawing than sculpture. The figure on the right shows the use and grace of finely woven tissue, under and upper—that over the bosom so delicate that the line of separation from the flesh of the neck is unseen." [6]

(iii.) *Ploughing* (Plate XXXV.).—"The sword in its Christian form. Magnificent: the grandest expression of the power of man over the earth and its strongest creatures that I remember in early sculpture. Here is victory." [6]

To study the bas-reliefs of the "Shepherd's Tower" is to feel in the presence of a devout mind. What purpose did Giotto mean to convey? Surely this—that all labour is sacred and worthy of consecration; here, on these twenty-seven reliefs, are represented, amongst others, the labour of the peasant, the skill of the potter, and the vocation of teacher, preacher, and astronomer—all engaged in to the glory of God; and as each worshipper glimpsed his calling on the base of the Campanile, he passed into the Cathedral, and there dedicated himself and his daily work to the service of God:—

"Come now to the Campanile, see in stone the designer's power
Embodied in sculptured marble at the base of the Shepherd's Tower—
The pride and glory of Florence—and witness the story of man,
Toiling upward by hand and brain to fulfil the Creator's plan;

[6] Ruskin: "Mornings in Florence."

See here the wonderful record of man from the day of his birth,
The conqueror of latent powers that lie in the stubborn earth;
Read here in the simplest duties of husbandry, workshop, and field,
In thought of teacher and preacher, in the increase their labours yield,

In every trial and effort, in each conquest and noble strife,
That the living God our Maker is the fountain and strength of life.
Be yours the voice of the preacher, or the hand upturning the sod,
Hear this the message of Giotto—'Do all to the glory of God!'"[7]

(2) *Jacopo della Quercia* (1374-1438).—Were we to contrast two pieces of sculpture which represent, respectively, the Greek and Christian outlook on death, our choice would rest on the stele of the lady Hegeso (Plate XXI.) already referred to, and the effigy of Ilaria del Carretto by Jacopo della Quercia in Lucca Cathedral. We have already remarked that on the stelæ still standing upright in the Ceramicus of Athens there is no direct reference to death itself; any allusion to that solemn event as an end to our earthly existence is avoided, nor is there any indication, by symbolism or otherwise, of the immortal hope. The idealised portrait of the lady Hegeso represents her to her friends in all the charm and simplicity of her life upon the earth. On the other hand, when we turn to the Effigy of Ilaria del Carretto (Plate XXXVI.) we realise that the Italian sculptor is the poet of death as well as of life.

In the presence of this beautiful work we are arrested and subdued by the thought that the last enemy should claim a victim so fair; yet are we comforted and inspired by the

[7] T. M. Davidson: "Poetic Thoughts on Christian Sculpture."

XXXI. PANEL OF PULPIT, PISA

XXXII. PANEL OF PULPIT, SIENNA

hope of immortality indelibly imprinted on the face and form of this recumbent figure.

The following description of the Effigy of Ilaria del Carretto by Ruskin is well known:—

"She is lying on a simple couch, with a hound at her feet. . . . The hair is bound in a flat braid over the fair brow, the sweet and arched eyes are closed, the tenderness of the loving lips is set and quiet, there is that about them which forbids breath, something which is not death nor sleep, but the pure image of both."[8]

In his age Ruskin wrote: "It is forty years since I first saw it and I have never found its like."[9]

(3) *Donatello* (1386-1466).—Donatello's St. George (Plate XXXVII.), St. John the Baptist, and his wooden statue of the Magdalen, are typical of that fearless faith, ascetic self-denial, and agonising penitence which demand a hereafter for the fulfilment of their ideals; and which, embodied in sculpture, we term the "Soul-expression" of Christian art.

Were we to consider the two respective views of life (Greek and Christian) perhaps no greater contrast could be presented to the mind than the Hermes of Praxiteles and the St. George of Donatello; to study these two great masterpieces in detail is to realise, in one respect, the difference between Greek and Christian thought.

In the Hermes (Plate XXXVIII.) we have the very embodiment of that complacency which characterises the art of the Golden Age of Greece; we feel that here, if anywhere, the physical and mental powers of youth are perfectly balanced; the physical frame is perfect, the mental vision is free from fear or regret, and the future has no forebodings.

When we turn to the St. George of Donatello we realise at once that he is the embodiment of other ideals. Instead

[8] Ruskin: "Modern Painters." [9] Collingwood: "Ruskin Relics," p. 93.

of complacency there is apprehension in the presence of an enemy; in place of self-satisfaction there is the fearlessness of a fighter; the sculptor has embodied the fears and the hopes of the human soul in the face of the St. George; "new hopes," impossible to find in the dignity and beauty of Greek art, "shine through the flesh they fray." St. George lives in a world where wrongs have to be righted, and where the strength of manhood must be given to the task, even though he give his life to the effort.

"Here is a Christian soldier ready to engage Apollyon in the battle to the death. . . . The body is but the shrine of an indwelling soul, the instrument and agent of a faith-directed will; and the crown of his conflict is no wreath of laurel or of parsley. In other words, the value of St. George to the sculptor lay not in its strength and youthful beauty—though he has endowed it with these excellent gifts—so much as in its significance for the eternal struggle of the soul with evil." [10]

St. George stands for the highest type of chivalry. In his legendary fight with the dragon a woman's hand knit the armour to his frame. Did Ruskin, we wonder, have this statue in his mind when he wrote these beautiful words?—

"You cannot think that the buckling on of the knight's armour by his lady's hand was a mere caprice of romantic fashion. It is the type of an eternal truth—that the soul's armour is never well set to the heart unless a woman's hand has braced it; and it is only when she braces it loosely that the honour of manhood fails." [11]

(4) *Luca della Robbia* (1400-1482).—From this sculptor's works we select a panel from the famous Singing Gallery, Florence (Plate XXXIX.). On the numerous panels of this Gallery are children who never grow weary; unburdened with

[10] J. A. Symonds: "Renaissance in Italy," Vol. III., p. 138.
[11] Ruskin: "Sesame and Lilies."

XXXIII. RELIEF FROM GIOTTO'S TOWER—CREATION OF MAN

XXXIV. RELIEF FROM GIOTTO'S TOWER—WEAVING

care or remorse, they give expression to the joy of childhood in leaping, singing, playing, and dancing:—

"Movement has never been suggested in stone with less exaggeration, nor have marble lips been made to utter sweeter and more varied music." [12]

(5) *Michelangelo* (1475-1564). — Michelangelo ranks with Phidias as the greatest sculptors the world has known. Michelangelo's work crowns the Italian Renaissance; of his individual sculptures his Moses bears witness to law and truth; his David glows with the radiance and courage of youth; and his Il Penseroso, Dawn and Twilight, Morn and Evening in the Church of San Lorenzo proclaim him the greatest sculptor of Christendom and "Prophet of the Renaissance." His Pietà (Plate XL.) in St. Peter's, Rome, may be regarded as his most sublime statue: it was executed by the sculptor at the early age of twenty-five. Symonds writes of it thus:—"Christ is lying dead upon his mother's knees. With her right arm she supports his shoulders; her left hand is gently raised as though to say, 'Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow.' All that art can do to make death beautiful, and grief sublime, is achieved in this masterpiece."

Were it not for the subjects of his sculptures, the majesty, dignity, and arresting intellectuality of many of Michelangelo's works might well proclaim him a Greek—they are so magnificent, and so far removed from the more primitive "Soul-expression" of Gothic and early Renaissance sculptures.

[12] Symonds: "Renaissance in Italy," Vol. III., p. 349.

XXXV. RELIEF FROM GIOTTO'S TOWER—PLOUGHING

XXXVI. TOMB OF ILARIA DEL CARETTO

XXXVII. ST. GEORGE, BY DONATELLO

XXXVIII. HERMES, BY PRAXITELES

XXXIX. RELIEF FROM SINGING GALLERY, BY LUCA DELLA ROBBIA

XL. PIETA, BY MICHELANGELO

SUMMARY OF CONTRASTS.

WE shall now endeavour to give a brief summary of the art qualities of the greatest sculptures in the world as presented and contrasted in the preceding pages:—

(1) The contrast between Greek and early Egyptian sculptures in respect of Realism may be thus expressed:—

> The portrait sculptures of ancient Egypt are marvellous imitations of human models, and for a definite reason, namely, that they might be the home of the *Ka* if the mummy were destroyed.
>
> The sculptures of the Golden Age of Greece, on the other hand, while based on the human form, are not realistic, but idealised human forms—the artistic conception of the sculptor, influenced by the poetic traditions of his race.

(2) The contrast between Greek and Assyrian art, in respect of Symbolism, is worthy of emphasis:—

> With one or two exceptions, such as the Greek Sphinx (doubtless of Egyptian origin) and some of the minor deities, Greek art is comparatively free from Symbolism in the sense in which it is found in Assyrian and Egyptian art. "The monstrous mixed forms in which the deities of Egypt or Mesopotamia often found the expression of their superhuman and mysterious powers, do not seem to have appealed to the imagination of the Greeks." [1]
>
> The Greek artist had an intense love of the human form; he appreciated its beauty and its capabilities, and

[1] E. A. Gardner: "Religion and Art in Ancient Greece," p. 65.

to him, as a sculptor, it was adequate for the expression of such qualities as he deemed his gods to possess. Through the human form he endeavoured to portray the majesty of Zeus, the complacency of Hera, the intellect of Athena, the charm of Aphrodite, and the sorrow of Demeter. There are attributes, it is true, which help to denote particular gods; we are familiar, for example, with the apple of Aphrodite, the helmet of Athena, the caduceus of Hermes, the bow of Artemis, and the wings of Victory and Eros; but such accessories are simply aids to identification; the Greek sculptor had no need of symbols to express divine qualities.

(3) The motifs of Greek and Christian sculpture respectively may be thus contrasted:—

Greek ideals are finite, and are capable of being adequately expressed in marble. Greek art of the Golden Age is

> "self-contained,
> The one thing finished in this hasty world,
> For ever finished."[2]

It is otherwise with Christian ideals; they are spiritual and stretch out into the infinite—hence that sense of incompleteness in Christian sculpture when compared with the self-complacency of Greek art:—

> "What if we so small
> Be greater and grander the while than they!
> Are they perfect of lineament, perfect of stature?
> In both, of such lower types are we
> Precisely because of our wider nature;
> *For time, theirs—ours, for eternity!*"[3]

[2] J. Russell Lowell: "The Cathedral," lines 269-271.
[3] Browning: "Old Pictures in Florence," Stanza xv., lines 3-8.

THE LANGUAGE OF ART.

A Comparison of Motif in Greek and Christian Sculpture.

We treasure the language of Art, our heritage from the ages
Which genius has stored in bronze and stone, enshrining the mind of sages;
Praxiteles singing the rhythm and charm of physical beauty;
Gothic Art setting forth the soul; Donatello, moral duty.
In the Art of the Golden Age life seems perfect and self-contained—
A finite life with no vision of goal to be sought but scarce attained:
No sign of a soul's endeavour, no regard for a world undone;
The laurel wreath for the athlete, but no martyr's crown to be won.
There is lack in their quest for beauty: but leap o'er a thousand years,
Read the scroll of Martyrs, Heroes, Saints—questing bravely mid hopes and fears.
In the George of Donatello we find the man stand forth as a whole,
Possessing the valiance of youth and the faith of the fearless soul;
He lives in a world of beauty, distempered with hate and wrong,
Where the captive awaits deliv'rance, and the weak awaits the strong:
The knight is shrined in the roll of our race's gallant story,
His chivalry intertwined in the crown of England's glory.
The Art of Greece portrays the charm and perfection of earthly life,
In Christian Art we find the soul and its summons to moral strife.
So we read the story of Art, our heritage from the Ages,
The genius stored in bronze and stone, revealing the mind of sages.

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